Rachel Cohen  
 People lend their help for a variety of reasons, especially in high school. Volunteerism amongst youth has always been significantly high, but it has increased even more in the past decade. In 2000, Harvard's Institute of Politics conducted a survey and found that 85% of college students believe volunteerism is better than political engagement for addressing issues within the community. Okay, so community service is popular. We all know that. Some people love the satisfaction they feel after lending their assistance to help make the world a better place. Some people do it for the incentive and want to boost their college application to appear more well rounded. And some people are guilty trying to perhaps redeem themselves for a prior event or action that took place. So why do I do it?  
 Well, though I probably subconsciously do it for all the reasons listed above, the *conscious* reason I do it is probably not as common. I do it, because I can. I suppose it’s hard to explain. I’m an avid addict to current events and politics. I am continually reminded about the threatening issues facing our country and, admittedly, it is overwhelming. I know I’m too young to do anything substantially influential—but I hate the idea of not being able to do anything at all. For example, I knew I wasn’t old enough to vote in the 2008 election, but that didn’t stop me from persuading people *who could* who to vote for. I’m just not one to sit idly and wait for my turn.  
 I would say this is characteristic of me in all regards of my life. Whenever we are assigned group projects in school, I immediately step up to tackle a difficult (unless of course this is a math project, then I happily step aside) portion to do myself. It’s not that I don’t trust other people to do it, but more that I know I could do it myself—so why not? I help others, because I know I can. I’m the President of Interact which is the high school branch of Rotary International—an organization that helps with local as well as international issues. The issues that we help out with are not necessarily the main causes I personally espouse, but I do them because I feel capable enough to contribute and assist. And since I know there are people who are *not* capable of leading or helping, I do so because I feel morally inclined. Yet, I do not really do it to feel better about myself, or for morally religious reasons, or anything like that. I mainly help because I feel that it is the piece of the pie of contribution I am able to serve at this point in my life.  
 I hope that one day I will be able to make a bigger difference. Right now I can clean up parks. One day maybe I can write environmental conservation laws. In high school, I can visit inner-city students or donate my old books and school materials. When I’m older, maybe I can make a serious dent in educational reform on a national scale. At this stage in my life I can serve soup in a soup kitchen. But hopefully, one day, I can help join the political fight to end hunger.  
 I’m aware that these are big ideals, but I like to think big. I help, because I can. And because I hope that maybe someday the people I help will pay it forward to someone else. And that all will help make the world a little less discordant.